

Update on WDFW Grazing Program Review

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Agenda

- Current Practices
- Purpose of Review
- Components
- Approach
- Initial Proposed Changes & Improvements
- Timeline



Klickitat Wildlife Area Pasture

Current Practices

Why We Graze

- Enhance habitat for wildlife through manipulation of vegetation
- Control weeds
- Facilitate coordinated resource management
- Support community character and economy



Emergency Pasture, Methow Wildlife Area

Current Practices

Grazing Requirements

- Maintain ecological integrity
- Cross-program review
- Adaptive management
- Grazing plan



Current Practices

WDFW Grazing Permits

- 49 permits
 - Regular 5-year permits
 - Crossing and other temporary permits
 - DNR-issued permits acquired through land transactions
- 68,000+ acres (~7% of WDFW-managed lands)
- 9,300+ AUM's (measure of forage, not animals)

Purpose of Review

WDFW is conducting a programmatic review of its grazing policies and practices to ensure that the agency's grazing program on department lands is consistent with WDFW's mission and strategic goals.

Purpose of Review

The purpose of this review is to create a grazing program on WDFW lands that:

- Protects and perpetuates fish, wildlife and ecosystems, through internal review, monitoring, and adaptive management
- Reflects the WDFW value of maintaining working lands (protect community character and promote economic activity)
- Complies with state and federal law, Commission policy, and legal agreements
- Is clear, consistent and managed efficiently and consistently through a defined internal review and approval process

Components of Review

- WAC 232-12-181
- Commission Policy C-6003
- Grazing Evaluation Framework
- Grazing Management Plans
- Monitoring and Adaptive Management



Approach of Review

- Develop proposed changes for each component
- Internal and external review and input on changes
- Formal public review where appropriate (WAC, SEPA)
- Develop implementation strategies and training

Initial Proposed Changes

WAC 232-12-181

- Permit grazing to meet social and community values (protect community character, promote economic activity)
- Clarify which grazing permits come to the commission for review
- Clarify when a grazing management plan is required for temporary permits

Initial Proposed Changes

Commission Policy C-6003

- Permit grazing to meet social and community values (protect community character, promote economic activity)
- Clarify which grazing permits come to the commission for review
- Clarify when a grazing management plan is required for temporary permits

Initial Proposed Changes

Grazing Evaluation Framework

- Evaluates new potential grazing on WDFW lands
- Evaluates new or existing grazing on proposed land acquisition
- Uses decision criteria to evaluate:
 - Consistency with mission and strategic plan
 - Improve ecological integrity or habitat for target species
 - Promote economic activity or support community character
 - Consistency with acquisition fund source
 - Potential environmental and species risks
 - Implementation requirements and costs

Initial Proposed Changes

Grazing Management Plan

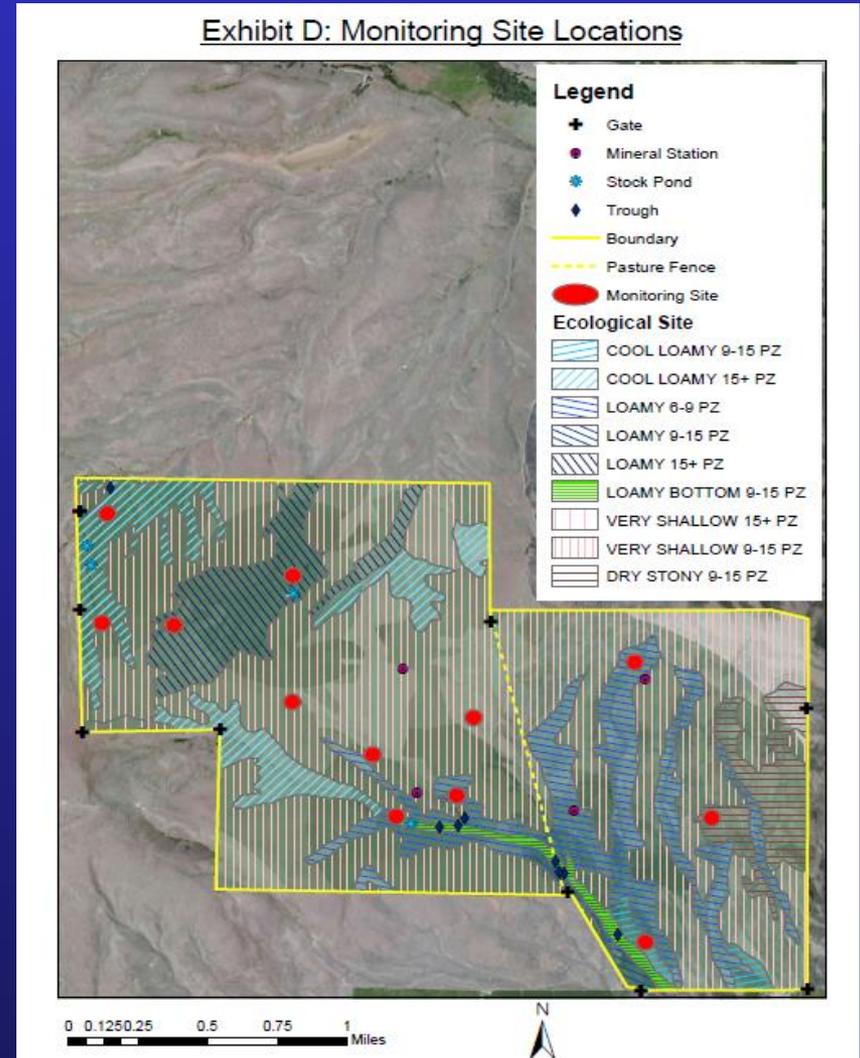
- Purpose
- Resource Description
- Goals and Objectives
- Grazing Prescription
- Effects/Ecosystem Standards Checklist (HB 1309)
- Issues and Contingencies
- Monitoring Plan



Initial Proposed Changes

Monitoring and Adaptive Management

- Track progress toward achievement of objectives
- Document compliance with grazing plan
- Monitor vegetation and soil cover information for adaptive management



Timeline

- October 2015 - Component review & draft proposed changes
- December 2015 - Internal review
- March 2016 - External scoping
- June 2016 - Formal public input (WAC, SEPA)
- December 2016 - Implementation strategies and training

Questions?

